



3510-08

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**National Estuarine Research Reserve System**

**AGENCY:** Estuarine Reserves Division, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce

**ACTION:** Notice of Public Comment Period for the Apalachicola, Florida National Estuarine Research Reserve Management Plan revisions.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that the Estuarine Reserves Division, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce is announcing a thirty day public comment period for the Apalachicola, Florida National Estuarine Research Reserve Management Plan revisions. Pursuant to 15 CFR Section 921.33(c), the revised plan will bring the reserve into compliance. The Apalachicola Reserve revised plan will replace the plan approved in 2003.

The revised management plan outlines the administrative structure; the research & monitoring, education, training, and stewardship goals of the reserve; and the plans for future land acquisition and facility development to support reserve

operations.

The Apalachicola Reserve emphasizes a fully integrated approach that links ongoing research, education, training and stewardship programs together. This integrated approach, in coordination with strategic partnerships addresses high priority reserve issues including public use and access, changing land use patterns, the loss of cultural resources, impacts of global and regional processes on ecosystems and communities, engagement with local communities, and changes in reserve habitats. Since the last management plan, the reserve has expanded its monitoring and geographic information system programs; increased staff resources; completed a site profile, established a Coastal Training Program; expanded educational programs; and constructed a new nature center and headquarters complex in the town of Eastpoint that includes laboratories, offices, classrooms, interpretative areas, and are planning interpretive trails.

With the approval of this management plan, the Apalachicola Reserve will decrease their total acreage from 246,766 acres to 234,715. The change is attributable to accuracy adjustments based on improved geographic information for the site. The revised management plan will serve as the guiding document for the 234,715 acre Apalachicola Reserve for the next five years.

View the Apalachicola, Florida Reserve Management Plan revision

at (<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/coastal/sites/apalachicola/>) and provide comments to ([Lee.Edmiston@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:Lee.Edmiston@dep.state.fl.us)).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Matt Chasse at (301) 563-1198 or Erica Seiden at (301) 563-1172 of NOAA's National Ocean Service, Estuarine Reserves Division, 1305 East-West Highway, N/ORM5, 10<sup>th</sup> floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

**Dated:** \_January 29, 2014.

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